

Media Release

The Hon Jaala Pulford MLC

Minister for Employment

Minister for Innovation, Medical Research and the Digital Economy

Minister for Small Business

Minister for Resources



Thursday, 25 August 2022

SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES TO WORK WELL MENTALLY

The Andrews Labor Government is supporting small businesses to create safe and mentally healthy workplaces so employees can thrive.

Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford and Minister for Workplace Safety Ingrid Stitt today launched the Labor Government's *Workwell Toolkit for Small Business*, a free online service with practical ideas and information to prevent mental injury in the workplace.

The toolkit has specifically been revamped for small businesses to include case studies and policy templates to promote mental wellbeing.

Tips and guides include ways to prevent bullying, create a culture of respect, promote work-life balance and establish a workplace mental health policy.

Mischa Merz, owner of Footscray boxing gym Mischa's Boxing Central, has reaped the benefits of using the toolkit to prioritise mental health as much as physical health.

The former Australian National Boxing champion runs the gym with six staff, with the idea everyone is welcome to give boxing a go and part of that means ensuring an inclusive work environment guided by tips from the toolkit.

Analysis by PwC with the Beyond Blue National Mental Health Commission has revealed in dollar terms alone, for every \$1 invested in mental health in the workplace businesses will see an average of \$2.30 returned.

The WorkWell Toolkit for Small Business is part of the Government's \$26 million Wellbeing and Mental Health Support of Victorian Businesses initiative.

The WorkWell Toolkit for Small Business is now available on WorkSafe Victoria's website worksafe.vic.gov.au.

Quotes attributable to Minister for Small Business Jaala Pulford

"The toolkit has been designed for small businesses to create a mentally healthy workplace which benefits everyone."

"This will help small businesses to reduce staff stress levels as effectively as possible."

Quote attributable to Minister for Workplace Safety Ingrid Stitt

"When it comes to workplace safety, mental health is just as important as physical health – this toolkit will help small businesses develop an understanding of how to create mentally healthy workplaces and prevent mental injury from happening in the first place."

Quotes attributable to Mischa's Boxing Central Owner Mischa Merz

"Physical fitness and mental fitness are inextricably linked – you can't really separate them. That's why as a small business owner, I know the importance of protecting and promoting the mental health of my staff."

Media contact: Stephanie Hobbs 0429 275 437 | stephanie.hobbs@minstaff.vic.gov.au